



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Jewel Cave
National Monument

11149 US Hwy 16
Building B12
Custer, SD 57730
605-673-8300 phone
605-673-8397 fax

Jewel Cave National Monument News Release

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Contact: **Bradley Block / Chief of Interpretation / bradley_block@nps.gov**

Jewel Cave Closes Canyons Trail for Construction

Custer, SD – Jewel Cave National Monument is closing the Canyons Trail on Monday, March 26 for construction work. The three-mile trail takes hikers from the Visitor Center to the Jewel Cave Historic Area. C3 Construction of Evergreen, Colorado, is the contractor selected to improve the Monument's interior roadways. Part of the project includes the backcountry region of the Monument, which the Canyons Trail uses for its hiking route.

"The Jasper Fire of August 2000 burned through a large portion of the Monument, consuming thousands of ponderosa pine trees. After the fire, heavy rains caused erosion issues for many of the interior roadways. We received funding to repair these areas and once again make them available for service uses, such as search and rescue, wildland fire management, and routine trail maintenance," said Superintendent Larry Johnson.

The road work will improve the Lithograph Canyon Road, as well as service roadways to the septic lagoons and other off-trail facility sites. When completed, it is expected that each roadway will be able to accommodate the appropriate vehicles and make for easier access under any weather condition. Johnson comments, "This project has been delayed for a number of years, due to a lack of funding. We are happy to have received funding this fiscal year in order to repair our infrastructure to a more appropriate level."

The construction work is slated to take about four to eight weeks to complete. Visitors are still able to hike the Roof Trail, which is a one-quarter-mile trail that meanders through the forest near the Visitor Center. It is an easy trail and is often used by families with young children. During the construction work, the Visitor Center and cave tour schedule will also be available from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Johnson remarks, "We are taking advantage of the spring weather conditions and moving forward with this project, hopefully getting everything done before the hectic summer season. Even though one trail will be closed, we still encourage visitors to recreate at the Monument by hiking the Roof Trail or taking part in a guided cave tour."

For more information about the Monument, call the Visitor Center at 605-673-8300 and select Option 2. The Monument can also be accessed online at www.nps.gov/jeca.

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